item i.e. ferrous scrap, in the current year's budget;

(b) whether the Steel Furnace Association of India has protested against this discrimination;

(c) whether a large number of arc and induction furnaces are closing down due to increase cost of inputs; and

(d) what steps Government are taking to provide relief to the secondary steel sector?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M. V. CHANDRASHEKHAR MURTHY): (a) and (b) In the Budget for 1993-94, with effect from 28.2.1993, basic customs duty on steel melting scrap was increased from 10 per cent to 15 per cent ad valorem. The Steel Furnace Association of India has represented against the increase in import duty.

(c) Information about units closing down to increased costs of inputs will be collected and laid on the Table of the House.

(d) To provide some relief to the mini steel plants, customs duty on steel melting scrap has been reduced from 15 per cent to 12.5 per cent with effect from 4th May, 1993.

Permission to Foreign Insurance companies to enter Indian Insurance Sector

1615. DR. BAPU KALDATE:
SHRIMATI KAMLA SINHA:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Sun Life Insurance Corporation of U.K. has proposed the setting up of a subsidiary with the Life Insurance Corporation of India;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof;

(c) whether U.S. Insurance Companies have also shown interest in the untapped Indian market in the insurance business;

(d) if so, what are the implications involved with the entry of the foreign insurance companies into the domestic insurance sector; and

(e) what is the decision, if any, taken by Government on the question of allowng foreign competition in the insurance business in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (DR. ABRAR AHMED):

(a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

(e) The Government have appointed a High Powered Committee to recommend reforms in the insurance industry aimed at introducing a more competitive environment subject to suitable regulation and supervision, and submit its report within six months. A view on the question of foreign competition in the insurance business will be taken only after the recommendations of the High Powered Committee become avialable.

नए पूंजी निवेश को प्रोत्साहित करने के उपाय

1616. **श्री ईश दत्त यादव** : क्या वित्त मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि :

(क) क्या सरकार ने नए पूंजी निवेश को प्रोत्साहित करने के कोई उपाय किये हैं ;

(ख) यदि हां, तो तत्संबंधी ब्यौरे क्या हैं ; और